1:Opler E-5 (1931-1937)1941
(ca. 1870) NT8 Eastern Apache NT8
Chiricahua

224
43
576
577
156

C. told me what happened another time. He said, "I saw a big buck in the bushes. I shot him, and the deer just dropped down. So I went over there and put my knife in its throat so it would bleed. Then I had to get my horse that I had left a long ways behind. This happened in a canyon, and, when I shot, A. was over there and heard it.

"While I went back after my horse, A. got to my deer. He dragged it about fifty yards away into some other bushes. I got back to the place where I had left the deer, but I couldn't find it. I followed the track, but every now and then he had lifted up the deer, trying to make me lose the trail. All the time I was trailing I thought no human would do a thing like that. I thought it must be a bear. So I got off my horse and loaded my gun and followed it in the brush, down the hill.

"Pretty soon I saw something black. It was moving in the bushes and I couldn't tell what it was. I was just a little way from it, maybe twenty yards. I saw the black hair; I thought it was a bear. So there I was. I wanted to see where his head was, for I wanted to shoot him in the ribs. I followed him with my rifle, ready to shoot.

"Then A. stood up and said, 'Phew!' I had almost shot that fellow! I walked up to him. I asked him, 'Why is it you took my deer? Why is it you didn't butcher it up there where it was but carried it down here? I almost shot you. I almost took you for a bear.'

"Then A. told me, 'There's your deer; take it then!' I said, 'Go ahead; take what you want. I'll take the rest of it.' "

Then A. took the hide and C. got what was left. C. said, "I was pretty good about it and let him have what he wanted."

When three men are hunting together, and one shoots a deer, his companions run for the fallen animal, and the first to touch it has the privilege of skinning it and keeping the hide. To the others usually go portions of the meat.

It is customary to help the widows and the aged. If there are many such individuals and meat is scarce, the hunter may have little meat left upon his arrival at his own home:

[036]
[037]

If you go through the camps with a deer, they take it from you. You can't say anything. It's hard to refuse those who haven't any meat. That's the Chiricahua way. They take the hide and the meat; they take what they want. I used to sneak in at night. That's what some do.

Another informant feels that the distribution of food is governed by a more spontaneous generosity. "When a man returns from the hunt, the proceeds are his own. He doesn't have to give anything, but even if a lazy man wants food, he would not refuse him."